

Claims:-

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1. A signal sequencing control means for an electronic device, said sequencing control means including an electronic circuit (2) and timing means, to allow a sequence of control signals to be activated in a pre-determined order for operation of the device and deactivated in a reverse order for disabling the device, characterised in that the electronic circuit is driven to generate the sequence of control signals in a forward and reverse direction along the same circuit path.

2. A signal sequencing control means according to claim 1 characterised in that each signal is controlled by a resistor/capacitor combination.

3. A signal sequencing control means according to claim 2 characterised in that the control signals are controlled by a network of said resistor/capacitor combinations (18, 20; 24, 26; 30, 32; 18, 38) and this network provides the activation/deactivation of the signals in sequence at pre-determined time intervals.

4. A signal sequencing control means according to claim 3 characterised in that the resistors (18, 24, 30) of the network are provided in series.

5. A signal sequencing control means according to claim 1 characterised in that the sequence of control signals is being operated via a number of logic gates (14, 22, 28, 34).

6. A signal sequencing control means according to claim 5 characterised in that one or more of the logic gates (14, 22, 28, 34) are Schmidt Logic Gates.

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7. A signal sequencing control means according to claim 1 characterised in that the circuit path includes one or more logic gates (14, 22, 28, 34) and voltage is driven by one of said gates along a circuit path through a series of resistors (18, 24, 30) in a first direction via a diode (16) at the start of the resistor path, and a reverse diode (36) is provided at the end of the resistor path to drive the voltage through the resistors (18, 24, 30) in the reverse direction.

8. A signal sequencing control means according to claim 1 characterised in that the sequence of signals in a forwards direction is different to the sequence of signals in a reverse direction and the control signals in the forwards and reverse direction is driven using the same circuit path.

9. A signal sequencing control means according to claim 1 characterised in that the electronic device is a smart card.

10. A signal sequencing control means according to claim 9 characterised in that the smart card has at least three lines (6, 8, 10) which need to be activated in a pre-determined order for operation of the device and deactivated in a reverse order for disabling the device.

11. A signal sequencing control means for a smart card interface, said interface including an electronic circuit (2) and timing means, to allow a sequence of control signals to be activated in a pre-determined order for operation of the card and deactivated in a reverse order for disabling the card and characterised in that the electronic circuit is driven to generate the sequence of control signals in a forwards and reverse direction along the same circuit path.

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12. A smart card reading apparatus, said apparatus for reading/receiving and processing signals for a smart card, said reading apparatus having an electronic circuit (2) and wherein the reading apparatus includes timing means to allow a sequence of control signals to be activated in a pre-determined order for operation of the card and deactivated in a reverse order for disabling the card and characterised in that the electronic circuit is driven to generate the sequence of control signals in a forwards and reverse direction along the same circuit path.